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Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6586th meeting

Tuesday, 19 July 2011, 11 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wittig	(Germany)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Čolaković
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Sun Xiaobo
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Bonne
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Edokpa
	Portugal	Mr. Vaz Patto
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zhukov
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010) (S/2011/435)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010) (S/2011/435)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ad Melkert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/435, containing the third report of the secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010).

I now give the floor to Mr. Melkert.

Mr. Melkert: I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to introduce the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2011/435) on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). This comes at an important time when the Council will be considering UNAMI's mandate renewal next week.

"Are you optimistic or are you pessimistic?" has been the question I have been asked most by many. As we know, events tend to shape intents at least as much as the other way around. In most of what I have witnessed in Iraq there is ground for cautious optimism, provided that determined leadership within the country and a stronger spirit of cooperation in the region with Iraq prevail.

In some important aspects, Iraq is at the heart of fundamental changes in the region. The Iraqi system of Government incorporates a power-sharing Constitution, guaranteeing the participation of women and minorities and nurturing a culture of ongoing constitutional debate. Regular elections have taken place, conducted in line with international standards. While drawn out, Government formation has indeed progressed. Meanwhile, Parliament is taking an increasingly important role in decision-making. And in a departure from decades of authoritarian regime, negotiations between all parties have become the predominant feature of political life. In the words of Foreign Minister Zebari, speaking of Iraq and the wider region: "The time of the single-party State and the ruling party is over ... This era is at an end."

In the slipstream of events in the region, demonstrations have been recognized as a legitimate way to express opinions or grievances, although all too often the practice of freedom of expression is under considerable pressure. Still, the Government and the Council of Representatives have embarked on a true debate about the policies that need to be put in place in order to modernize infrastructure and the economy, improve social services delivery and combat institutional lethargy and corruption.

Iraq's economy, meanwhile, continues to grow at a rate of over 10 per cent, with oil revenues at a higher level than projected and updates on proven reserves reconfirming Iraq's prominence in global oil production for a long time to come. Total foreign direct investment in 2010 increased by almost 50 per cent against the previous year, up to a level of just over $42 billion. Areas that have benefited include construction, transportation, electricity, industry, oil and gas, water and sanitation, health and agriculture. At the same time Iraq's poverty index remains high at 22.9 per cent. Such inequality poses an instability risk for the future.

These political and economic facts matter in a country that has suffered much during three decades of war and oppression. Reconstruction, institution-building and bringing back knowledge all take time. There have also been setbacks as armed opposition groups continue to try to undo positive developments, most notably in waves of kidnappings and assassinations targeting civil servants, holders of political office, academics, doctors and activists, undoubtedly impacting State- and society-building at this crucial time. These and other acts of violence, which unfortunately have not subsided in recent months, emphasize once more the need for determined, jointly shared political action against the perpetrators, wherever they may derive their support from.

Consolidating and further strengthening the indisputable gains will require a keen understanding of the need to resolve pending issues. The key to this remains the implementation of the November 2010 Erbil agreement that brought the signatures of Prime Minister Al-Maliki, Kurdistan Regional Government President Barzani and Iraqiya leader Allawi together under an agreed power-sharing arrangement. As appointments of ministers in the security ministries are still pending and the National Council for Strategic Policies has not yet been formed, there is understandable concern about whether the post-election spirit can prevail. In this context, as stressed in the report before the Council, the Secretary-General calls on Iraqi political leaders to put aside their differences and move swiftly to agree on the way forward.

It is important to note that on 10 July all leaders of the main political blocs met at the invitation of President Talabani in order to step up efforts to revitalize the spirit of consensus and look at ways to implement the Erbil agreement. Discussions also focused on the issue of the expiration of the bilateral status-of-forces agreement between Iraq and the United States. However, the indications at my most recent meetings do not provide grounds for optimism about a breakthrough any time soon.

Another issue that would benefit from consensus between parties is the mandate and selection of the next Independent High Electoral Commission in the course of next year. UNAMI stands ready to advise the Council of Representatives on the procedure that will be essential to consolidating independence and standards for organizing elections in the coming period.

I am pleased to report that UNAMI has continued to facilitate dialogue within the framework of the standing consultative mechanism. Importantly, interaction among key leaders within Kirkuk province has been positively affected by a new power-sharing arrangement between key representatives of the Kurdish, Arab and Turkmen components. Furthermore, UNAMI hosted all Council of Representatives members elected in Kirkuk as part of ongoing consultations on the conditions that would enable the delayed Provincial Council elections to take place in the near future. Discussions have further focused on power sharing in Ninewa, the conditions for conducting a census and the future of the combined security mechanism, which, under the auspices of United States Forces-Iraq, has contributed significantly to cooperation and coordination between the Iraqi security forces and the Peshmerga.

Maintaining security stability is important in the short run, provided that genuine efforts are made to address the underlying issues that have been a source of political controversy. The Mission is committed to helping stakeholders find common ground and mutually acceptable solutions to these and other issues in order to resolve the status of Kirkuk and other disputed areas. It is of great interest to Iraq and the international community that these overall positive experiences be consolidated and strengthened. With that purpose in mind, I visited the coordination centres of the combined security mechanism in the provinces of Kirkuk, Ninewa and Diyala in order to enable UNAMI to advise and assist, as per its mandate, the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government on the future of the mechanism and the possibility of continued international engagement, if requested.

While Iraq's internal affairs continue to require additional efforts to strengthen stability, the regional context requires attention as well. With Kuwait, Iraq shares not only a border but also a history and a future. Earlier this year, a breakthrough was achieved as a consequence of mutual visits by the respective Prime Ministers, and by the subsequent work on a comprehensive bilateral agenda under the auspices of their Foreign Ministers. Their decision to form a Joint Ministerial Committee is an important step towards finding viable solutions to their outstanding bilateral concerns, including those that have recently generated public discussion.

Notwithstanding those bilateral efforts, which I hope will be successful, Iraq, as the Secretary-General's report indicates, must demonstrate to the Council tangible and expeditious progress in implementing its outstanding Chapter VII obligations pertaining to Kuwait. These include missing Kuwaiti persons and property, as well as the Iraq-Kuwait boundary maintenance project and citizens' relocation. The Secretary-General has also consistently reminded the Iraqi Prime Minister that a letter from him reaffirming Iraq's commitment to its land and maritime boundaries with Kuwait under resolution 833 (1993) is an essential confidence-building measure. In this context, the Secretary-General's High-level

Coordinator and I both remain committed to assisting Iraq and Kuwait in bringing closure to these long-standing Security Council mandates.

The implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, formulated to support the National Development Plan, remains ongoing, with two main pillars: a $33-million private-sector development programme and a $55-million public-sector one. Noteworthy in that context is the essential support that the United Nations Population Fund recently provided to the Government for the successful completion of the dwelling and household part of the census.

On the human rights front, several initiatives were launched at the national and regional levels. In early June, the draft national action plan on human rights was discussed at a conference hosted by Prime Minister Al-Maliki in the Council of Representatives. During the discussions, more than 100 recommendations were incorporated into the plan. They cover issues affecting women's rights, children's rights, minorities, the rule of law, freedom of expression, internally displaced persons and refugees. In the Kurdistan region, its Parliament passed a law combating domestic violence in the region. While these are positive developments, efforts must continue to ensure that fundamental rights and freedoms are protected, notably with regard to the role of the media, and that conditions in detention facilities comply with international conventions.

For UNAMI, last week was an historic week of transition from years of support by United States forces to enhanced cooperation with the Iraqi security forces, and I would like to commend the Government for its strong commitment to the protection of United Nations staff. At my completion of a two-year period as the guest of the Iraqi people, I would like to conclude with some personal observations.

From the international perspective, there is every reason for strongly welcoming the return of Iraq as a full and respected member of the international community. As historically all parts of Iraq are inseparably connected to their neighbours, it remains true that what goes well in Iraq will be of tremendous benefit to the wider region. Steady economic development in Iraq will reinforce regional and international stability. Addressing major political, social and economic challenges could significantly contribute to reducing the space for extremism, including by distributing Iraq's wealth more fairly among its people. Conversely, it is true that what goes well in the region is of benefit to Iraq as well. Sustained engagement on the part of the international community will help to create the space needed to tap into the vast potential of more diverse and integrated economic development and to achieve a level of social progress that will ultimately define the future of the region.

Underscoring what the Secretary-General has said in his report, I therefore urge all countries in the region to step up their engagement with Iraq with a view to quickly resolving outstanding differences and identifying concrete areas of cooperation in the political, security and development fields that could be beneficial for all concerned. UNAMI, with the support of the Security Council, is prepared to do all it can to support such efforts.

Looking inside Iraq, I have been privileged to witness the genuine progress that has been made to replace a horrific past of ethnic confrontation with a future where coexistence and common interest define the interaction between Arabs and Kurds. For Iraq and for the wider region, it is truly significant to note achievements in the Kurdistan region that are a great asset to stability and confidence-building. This generates hope that common sense will prevail in addressing still significant but not insurmountable issues regarding the disputed areas, including Kirkuk. The key will be the readiness of all parties to respect mutual concerns relating to past confrontation and injustices, while substituting for these the recognition that pluralism should be recognized in power-sharing arrangements serving the common interest. As long as the parties in Iraq consider this helpful, I would strongly recommend maintaining international engagement so as to facilitate the processes that may gradually transform disputes into mutually acceptable solutions.

Real progress has also been achieved in replacing a ruthless dictatorship with institutions and representatives mandated by constitutional principles and practice. While many challenges remain in the process of ingraining human rights and democracy fundamentals into the minds and actions of all stakeholders, it is hard to see how this change could be reversed. The change, however, has come at an extreme cost, which is still tangible and visible on a daily basis

in the victims and the damage, despite the eight years that have gone by. Developments in the region are showing that change must, and eventually will, come primarily from within. The new Iraq will be a real opportunity for all Iraqis only if their leaders are decisive in their action, allies do not turn away in their support, and its sovereignty is respected. For the foreseeable future, the United Nations will be well placed to remain a trusted partner in this endeavour.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Government of Iraq, including Ambassador Al Bayati, the Security Council and the Secretary-General for the confidence they have vested in me over the past two years in support of my efforts as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to carry out the important mandate entrusted to UNAMI. I also thank the brave and able staff of UNAMI and the United Nations country team for their efforts in supporting the people of Iraq under difficult and challenging conditions.

The President: I thank Mr. Melkert for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would like to extend my thanks to the previous President of the Security Council, His Excellency the Permanent Representative of Gabon, for his efforts during the month of June. I would like also to thank Mr. Ad Melkert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, and his team in Baghdad and New York for their sincere efforts in helping the Iraqi people and the Iraqi Government.

The political and security situation in Iraq witnessed significant developments following the success of the Iraqi parliamentary elections, which were held in March 2010 with broad participation on the part of all components of the Iraqi population. Those elections resulted in the formation of a national partnership Government from all of the political blocs that won in the elections, which strengthened the democratic process and led to greater security and stability. The next stage, which will follow the withdrawal of the American forces at the end of this year, will bring immense challenges and responsibilities to the Iraqi Government.

From a security perspective, the Iraqi Government is continuing to improve the ability of its security forces and to prepare them to stand in the face of terrorist attacks, protect internal security and defend democracy in Iraq. The Iraqi Government will work on the optimum implementation of the strategic framework agreement with the United States and the partnership agreement with the European Union, which will, hopefully, be signed this year. The Iraqi Government will benefit from the expertise of NATO on building military capabilities in keeping with Security Council resolution 1546 (2004).

On 27 March, the Iraqi Prime Minister, Mr. Nuri al-Maliki, launched a 100-day initiative whose goal was to put Government institutions on the right path so as to enable them to improve their performance and to identify their strong points, in order to capitalize on them, and their weaknesses, in order to address them. The initiative coincided with the publication of a paper on administrative, political and services reforms and on fighting unemployment, which was approved by the Council of Ministers. The Prime Minister also decided to establish a coordination committee for the 100-day initiative, chaired by the Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers, to prepare a report on the outcome of the work performed by the ministries.

In a speech televised to the Iraqi people on 23 June, the Prime Minister stated that the general index and the final outcome of the 100-day plan showed that the performance of most ministries was between average and good. However, as the performance of quite a few ministries was weak and at an unacceptable level, a series of actions will be adopted: first, trim the Government and all non-essential and honorary positions, which had become an urgent need, according to all indicators; secondly, at the ministerial level, a change in the number of ministries; thirdly, conduct a professional evaluation aimed at implementing changes in the staff of a number of ministries at the level of deputy ministers, advisers and general directors; and fourthly, continue the process of monitoring and evaluation from the point reached by the 100-day initiative, at an accelerated pace.

The Iraqi Government was able to advance the process of national reconciliation by ending the issue of dissolved entities, integrating them into society within the framework of the Justice and Accountability Law. The Government also addressed the issue of the

Sons of Iraq — also known as the Awakening Council — and to date has integrated 45 per cent of them into the various ministries. Tribal councils were established for tribal reform and to avert conflicts, so as to achieve convergence among the different components of Iraqi society, with a view to breaking down the barriers placed by terrorists between the sons of the country.

The Government also supports the religious conferences held to bring closer the different views of Iraqis. It is also open to armed groups surrendering their weapons and converging, with the rest of the Iraqi people, under the tent of Iraq. In addition, the Government has created a general atmosphere conducive to reconciliation by promoting a culture of understanding and has moved to have the ministries of education, culture and religious endowments change certain school curricula so as to spread a culture of love and harmony among Iraqis.

In the field of development, the Iraqi Government has coordinated its efforts with those of its international partners to implement the National Development Plan for the five years from 2010 to 2014. The plan, whose cost will reach $186 billion, includes approximately 2,700 strategic projects in many fields and is aimed at making a quantum leap in terms of the Iraqi economy and improving the services provided to the country's citizens. The system for the management of Iraqi human development was recently finalized, with a view to supporting and following up on the implementation of the plan, at a time when the Government is working on the implementation of an ambitious development programme to build a strong economy that encourages investment and provides the appropriate legislative atmosphere to protect investors and their capital.

This coincided with the Prime Minister's assertion that the Iraqi Government was committed to its obligations in the context of reforming the Iraqi economy by adopting a free-market policy, carrying out the legislative reforms needed in different sectors, and giving the private sector the attention necessary for it to play its part in the economic development process.

In addition, the Iraqi oil sector is experiencing stability, with average exports of around 2 million barrels a day and average production of more than 2.5 million barrels a day. The Iraqi Government is still working to implement the national plan to improve the Iraqi oil industry, which aims to reach a production level of 12 million barrels per day in 2017.

Regarding the efforts made by the Iraqi Government to solve the housing problem, the Government signed a contract on 25 May with the Korean company Hanwha to build 100,000 units in Baghdad Province. On 31 May, the Government also signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the agency in charge of human settlement issues.

With regard to the subject of the census, while attending the celebration of the International Day for Population, organized by the Ministry of Planning, the Prime Minister reaffirmed that the Iraqi Government was committed to reaching an agreement to conduct the census because it was not possible to build a real State on scientific bases unless a general population census were conducted to survey all the needs and the available capacities and capabilities. The Prime Minister added that the census was a national development project that would meet the statistical needs of ministries and private institutions necessary for planning and development. He also stated that the Government had provided the necessary support for the census project, as well as the technical and professional preparations necessary to ensure its success.

The new Iraq has paid special attention to human rights issues by establishing credible and independent national mechanisms charged with monitoring the human rights situation in Iraq and ensuring that those rights are protected. The Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights was therefore established. Beginning in April, nominations began to be accepted for the Commission's 11-member council. The council will enjoy broad authority in monitoring the situation of human rights in Iraq.

In the same context, a conference was held in June to discuss the recommendations of the United Nations Human Rights Council. That meeting had the support of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and included the participation of Mr. Ad Melkert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq. Representatives from several international organizations, ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps in Baghdad were also in attendance. The conference called for a national plan for human

rights and for the teaching of human rights in schools and universities. Improving the education sector is also one of the main priorities for the Iraqi Government, which has adopted a broad programme to improve curricula, build schools and universities and send Iraqi students to other countries to study as part of the educational initiative.

On 7 April, Camp Ashraf, which is occupied by the Iranian Mujahedin Khalq Organization, witnessed security events after Iraqi security and riot control forces attempted to establish Government control in the north-eastern part of the camp, which includes farmland that belongs to Iraqi citizens. Iraqi forces were subject to an attack with firebombs and knives, which led to clashes. A number of camp residents were killed or injured, with seven members of the Iraqi forces injured. The aim of the security forces was not to take over the camp or remove its residents by force. I would like to point out here that, since 7 April, the Iraqi Government has allowed representatives of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and many international organizations to enter the camp to deliver food and medicine to its residents. The Government also expressed its willingness to start a Government investigation regarding those events.

However, that organization considers the camp as liberated and holy territory. It is refusing to leave the camp, which is a stark challenge to Iraq's sovereignty. The organization's leadership is interfering in Iraq's internal affairs and calling publicly for the overthrow of the Iraqi Government and inciting against it. This organization is considered a terrorist organization in the United States. It was considered as a terrorist group in Europe until it was removed from the European list of such organizations. It is also one of the organizations that collaborated with the former regime of Saddam Hussein, acting as a tool of repression against the Iraqi people. The Iraqi Government therefore took the decision to ensure the departure of members of the group from Iraq by the end of 2011, as well as to work on their resettlement and on guaranteeing their human rights.

Iraq has suffered for long time from the sanctions placed on it because it represented a threat to international peace and security after Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. However, since 2003 Iraq has proved beyond any doubt that it no longer represents a threat to international peace and security. In furtherance of the goals of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security, Iraq supports international efforts aimed at disarmament and arms control. On 19 August 2008, Iraq joined the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. On 12 February 2009, it acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. On 12 November 2009, Iraq signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions. And, on 11 August 2010, Iraq signed The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. In addition, Iraq chaired the substantive session of the Disarmament Commission held from 4 to 21 April 2011, which strengthened the momentum in the bilateral and group negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

All of this constitutes a clear message from Iraq that it is no longer a threat to international peace and security, but rather that Iraq is an important and effective country in the international efforts to spread international peace and security throughout our world.

On the regional front, the Arab world is witnessing a wave of political changes and reform movements that prove the rightness of Iraq's political direction in terms of achieving political change and adopting democracy, elections and the peaceful transition of power as a way of governing. I would like to point out that, during the 2004 discussions relating to development and modernization in the Arab world, Iraq emphasized the importance of activating the mechanisms of the joint Arab system to deepen the foundations of democracy, expand the participation of the masses in the political sector and in the taking of national decisions, continue economic reforms to raise the living conditions of Arab nations, ensure social justice and underscore the importance of women's role in society and the need to support their rights and to empower them, as well as many other important matters. If these points had been taken with seriousness and foresight, maybe we could have avoided many of the events now happening in the Arab world.

Owing to Iraq's belief in the importance of taking its leadership role in the joint Arab work system and its joint mechanisms — at the forefront of which is the Summit of the League of Arab States — Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs Hoshyar Zebari delivered a letter to the Secretary-General of the Arab League in which Iraq requested the postponement of the Summit scheduled to be held in Baghdad in May, to be rescheduled to its

regular time in March 2012. That request was due to the situation and political developments in the Arab world, which is still escalating, with the implications that entails. The Iraqi Government believes that, at this stage, the timing is not appropriate for the holding of the Summit. However, Iraq reserves its right to host the Arab Summit in Baghdad on the date I have mentioned. On 5 May, the general secretariat of the Arab League issued an official statement indicating that the Summit had been postponed upon an official request from Iraq, which reserved the right to host the Summit in Baghdad and to maintain the helm of the joint Arab work for a full year from the date of holding the next Summit.

As a result of Iraq's openness to all countries of the world, the past period has seen many visits to Baghdad by foreign officials. Mr. John Boehner, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, visited Baghdad on 16 April. Mr. Marzuki Ali, Speaker of Indonesia's People's Representative Council, visited Baghdad on 3 May. Ms. Nancy Pelosi, leader of the Democratic Party bloc in the United States Congress, visited Baghdad on 5 May. United States Senator John McCain visited Iraq, along with a congressional delegation, on 9 May. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visited Baghdad on 10 May. Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs Aliakbar Salehi visited Iraq on 11 May. Czech Prime Minister Petr Nečas visited Baghdad on 23 May. Jordanian Prime Minister Marouf Bakhit visited Baghdad on 1 June. Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe visited Iraq on 11 June.

In addition, Iraq's Prime Minister visited the Republic of Korea on 27 April, where he met President Lee Myung-bak and Mr. Park Hee-ta, Speaker of the National Assembly. Iraq's Minister for Foreign Affairs also headed Iraq's delegation to the ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Bali from 23 to 27 May.

At that meeting, he delivered a statement in which he expressed Iraq's desire to open collaboration channels in the field of investments, which would enforce the ties of cooperation between Iraq and countries of the Movement. He also expressed the hope of the Iraqi Government to activate its role at the working level with regional and international organizations, especially within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement. Mr. Hoshyar Zebari also headed Iraq's delegation that participated in the thirty-eighth work session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, held in Astana from 28 to 30 June.

On 15 December 2010, the Council hosted an historic meeting (see S/PV.6450) on Iraq at which three important resolutions were adopted: resolutions 1956 (2010), 1957 (2010) and 1958(2010). These resolutions represented the beginning of the end of sanctions and restrictions imposed on Iraq as a result of the crimes of the Saddam regime. The Iraqi Government is working on following up on those three resolutions adopted by the Security Council. The Iraqi Government has started consultations with the Secretariat to formulate a memorandum of understanding regarding the implementation of paragraph 7 of the resolution 1958 (2010) relating to ending the oil-for-food programme.

Iraq has presented its fourth and last report to the Security Council in April regarding the successor arrangements of the Development Fund for Iraq. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is following up on the subject of ratifying the additional protocol of the International Atomic Energy Agency as part of its commitment to resolution 1957 (2010).

The Government of Iraq, pursuant to its commitment to improve its relations with the State of Kuwait, has exhibited a thorough spirit of cooperation at various levels to resolve all outstanding issues. The Joint Ministerial Committee held a meeting in March, chaired by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of both countries. Iraq has emphasized the importance of the principle of joint management of the navigational channel in Khawr Abdullah and of respect for the report of the specialized committee in charge of marking the borders to ensure the freedom of navigation.

I would like to point out my Government's position regarding the issue of missing Kuwaitis and Kuwaiti property, as mentioned in the letter of 5 July from the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Secretary-General, which is not to extend the mandate of the High-level Coordinator when it expires on 31 December; to depend on the mechanisms of the Tripartite Commission; and, as suggested in the Minister's letter to the Secretary-General dated 26 November 2010, to establish a technical team in the Kuwaiti Embassy in Baghdad, which was welcomed by all members of the Security Council in its press statement of 17 December 2010 (SC/10130). Working

in this way, we could better serve the interests of our two countries.

The Foreign Minister asserted in his letter that the Government of Iraq is completely serious about solving all of its outstanding issues with the State of Kuwait and is proving that it is taking the necessary steps to implement relevant Security Council resolutions. Iraq realizes that confidence-building must originate from the desire of both countries to improve their relations in order to serve the interests of both the Iraqi and the Kuwaiti peoples.

Finally, I would like to reaffirm my Government's appreciation for the role played by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ad Melkert, in providing the backing and support requested by the Iraqi Government, in accordance with the mechanisms agreed upon by the two parties.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. I now invite members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on this subject.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.